

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 940

By Mumpower

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of Ronald D. McMahan of Knoxville.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly were greatly saddened to learn of the passing of Ronald D. McMahan; and

WHEREAS, Mr. McMahan was an exemplary public servant and consummate professional who worked assiduously to improve the quality of life for his fellow citizens in numerous capacities; and

WHEREAS, a native of Knoxville, Mr. McMahan was the only child of the late Clyde and Nina McMahan; he graduated in 1956 from West High School, where he was a stellar athlete; and

WHEREAS, throughout his professional career, Ronald McMahan served with acumen and alacrity and earned the respect of his peers for the exemplary quality of his work; and

WHEREAS, a distinguished journalist, Mr. McMahan spent many of his early years serving his community and contributing to its development by means of public service through journalistic endeavors. Much of this time was spent with *The Knoxville Journal*, where he was a delivery boy, a copy boy, and, while he attended classes at the University of Tennessee, a general assignment reporter; and

WHEREAS, an important part of the Chattanooga community, Ronald McMahan was also a reporter with *The Chattanooga Times* and *The Chattanooga Post* for a number of years; and

WHEREAS, during his time as a reporter, Mr. McMahan wrote about countless important events, including the United States Senate Campaign of Howard H. Baker, Jr., and wild Chattanooga police parties; his undercover reporting on bootlegging establishments in Knoxville led to the passage of a referendum to allow liquor to be sold by the drink; and

WHEREAS, Mr. McMahan took a hiatus from the journalism industry in 1969 to become the director of information for the Appalachian Regional Commission in Washington, D.C.; he later joined Senator Baker's staff as press secretary and served the Senator as he co-chaired the Senate Watergate hearings; and

WHEREAS, in 1981, Ronald McMahan returned to *The Knoxville Journal* as its editor; his innovative leadership and emphasis on investigative reporting earned the paper recognition from the Tennessee Press Association in 1983 as the best newspaper in the State and, in 1984, it was the State's fastest growing paper; and

WHEREAS, under Mr. McMahan's guidance, *The Knoxville Journal* collaborated with *The Tennessean* to report on the Butcher bank collapse; the resulting series of articles won several major journalism awards; and

WHEREAS, Ronald McMahan purchased *The Knoxville Journal* in 1986 and continued his successful leadership of the paper until 1988, at which time he sold it to Persis Corporation.; and

WHEREAS, after his career in journalism, Mr. McMahan co-owned a public and government relations company until he sold the business to his son, David McMahan, and retired in 1998; and

WHEREAS, Ronald McMahan is survived by his wife, Wanda; his sons and daughters-in-law, David and Kara McMahan and Mike and Aimee McMahan; his daughter and son-in-law, Vandi McMahan Bellamy and Will Bellamy; their mother, Evadine Ownby McMahan; and his five grandchildren, Morgan McMahan, Madison McMahan, Stroud McMahan, Joe McMahan, and Ann Clark Bellamy; and

WHEREAS, Mr. McMahan leaves behind an indelible legacy of integrity and probity in public life and diligence and dedication in all his chosen endeavors; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this General Assembly should pause to remember the bountiful life of this exceptional public servant; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED FIFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we honor the memory of Ronald D. McMahan, reflecting fondly upon his

impeccable character and his stalwart commitment to living the examined life with courage and conviction.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we express our sympathy and offer our condolences to the family of Mr. McMahan.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.